



Connecticut
Early Childhood
Alliance

**Testimony of Merrill Gay
Executive Director, Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance
Before the Appropriations Committee
March 12, 2014**

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and Members of the Committee,

I am Merrill Gay, Executive Director of the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance. The Alliance is a statewide advocacy and membership organization committed to improving outcomes for all children, birth through age eight, in the areas of early learning, health, safety, and economic security.

I am here to testify in support of **SR 9 and HR 5 APPROVING THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION (CSEA-SEIU LOCAL 2001).**

The Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance urges you to support SR 9 and HR 5 to approve the collective bargaining agreement between the state of Connecticut and the home based childcare providers who care for children subsidized by the Care4kids program.

Frankly it is embarrassing that Connecticut hasn't raised the rate it pays for childcare under Care4kids since 2001. Home based providers have suffered the lowest of rates with kith and kin providers being paid just \$89 a week. Even when they care for 3 children they have earned less than minimum wage. This agreement is the first step in righting that wrong. Over the next four years it will phase in increases and tie rates to the minimum wage.

We urge you to support SR 9 and HR5.